

Request for Reconsideration:

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation that the Examiner allowed claims 9-11, 16-18, and 22-24 in the above-captioned patent application. Applicant is canceling claims 1-3, 12-15, 19-21, and 43. Thus, only allowed claims currently are pending in the above-captioned patent application. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the above-captioned patent application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Remarks:

1. Rejections

Claims 1-3, 12-15, 19-21, and 43 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶2, as allegedly being indefinite. Claims 1-3, 12-15, 19-21, and 43 also stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,766,240 to Johnson. Applicants respectfully traverses.

2. 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶2

Claims 1-3, 12-15, 19-21, and 43 stand rejected as allegedly being indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner asserts that it is unclear whether the limitation “means for securing fixing suture” is intended as means for securing sutures or means for fixing sutures. Applicants have canceled claims 1-3, 12-15, 19-21, and 43. Therefore, the indefiniteness rejection of claims 1-3, 12-15, 19-21, and 43 is rendered moot.

3. 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1-3, 12-15, 19-21, and 43 stand rejected as allegedly being anticipated by Johnson. Applicant has canceled claims 1-3, 12-15, 19-21, and 43. Therefore, the anticipation rejection of 1-3, 12-15, 19-21, and 43 is rendered moot.

Conclusion:

Applicants respectfully submit that this application, as amended, is in condition for allowance, and such disposition is earnestly solicited. If the Examiner believes that a further interview with Applicants' representatives, either in person or by telephone, would expedite prosecution of this application, we would welcome such an opportunity. .

Respectfully submitted,

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